

Antioch, Ill. - As part of her ongoing efforts to help teens and kids learn to use the Internet safely, Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-08) hosted the Federal Trade Commission at Emmons School in Antioch today as it presented Net Cetera, a new national Internet Safety campaign mandated by Bean's SAFER NET bill.

"Our children know not to talk to strangers, but today's Internet society has pushed them onto a much larger playground," Bean said. "Learning to use the Internet is a vital life skill for our children and teenagers in the 21st century economy, but we also have to make sure they learn how to stay safe. My legislation prompted the FTC's campaign so parents and schools will have a reliable source of information for safety and guidelines for our children."

"The Federal Trade Commission is very pleased that Net Cetera has so much support from Congresswoman Bean and her colleagues, and we are looking forward to working together to get the booklet into the hands of parents from coast to coast," said Carolyn Shanoff, director of the FTC's consumer and business education program. "With kids spending so much time online every day, it's really important for parents to communicate how their values apply in the digital world."

William Hodor, the FTC's Staff Attorney for the Midwest Region, spoke to an assembly of about 120 middle school students, giving them everyday tips on how to avoid Internet predators, cyberbullying, and identity theft, as well as the dangers of sexually explicit instant and text messages. The Congresswoman and Hodor later took questions from the students.

The national Net Cetera campaign has already distributed literature to 1.2 million parents, teachers, law-enforcement officials and youth organizations. Handouts and guides are available for free and can be ordered through the FTC's website.

The FTC was directed to launch this campaign by Bean's SAFER NET legislation, which became law in October 2008 as part of S. 1492, the Broadband Data Improvement Act. The law also directed the FTC to become a national clearinghouse for Internet Safety information and increased industry accountability by establishing a working group through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to review and evaluate industry efforts.

Two additional Internet Safety bills cosponsored by Bean, also became law last Congress.

Bean helped introduce H.R. 3845, the PROTECT Act (Providing Resources Officers and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to our Children Act). The bill, authored by Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) will build a strong nationwide network of highly trained law enforcement experts to track down known sex offenders. It provides resources for following offenders' Internet footprints online.

Bean was also a co-sponsor of H.R. 719, the KIDS Act (Keeping the Internet Devoid of Sexual Predators Act). The bill, authored by Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), requires sex offenders to

register their e-mail and instant message addresses with the National Sex Offender Registry, as they now register their physical addresses.

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